



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Western District of New York*

Further inquiries: (716) 843-5814

*138 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14202*

PRESS RELEASE

December 11, 2003

United States Attorney Michael A. Battle released today the most recent data on firearms related charges in the District in conjunction with the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative.

U.S. Attorney Battle stated that “gun crime reduction is the top domestic criminal justice initiative of President Bush and Attorney General John Ashcroft. Because of our partnerships with state, local and federal law enforcement agencies and community leaders, along the resources and support provided by the President and the Attorney General, we have been able to implement a strong locally-targeted gun violence initiative.”

Project Safe Neighborhoods is a comprehensive approach and a multifaceted strategy to deter and punish gun violence from all sides. Project Safe Neighborhoods is achieving unprecedented coordination among law enforcement officials, with an emphasis on prevention, tactical intelligence gathering, more aggressive prosecutions and enhanced

accountability through performance measures. All levels of law enforcement work together to determine which venue – State or Federal Court – will result in the toughest sentence for a particular gun related crime. A critical element of the local gun violence reduction initiative is an aggressive community outreach campaign that couples a strong enforcement message with prevention and education messages. Criminals are warned that they will do “hard time for gun crime.”

From the inception of the Project Safe Neighborhood program in 1998, Monroe County has prosecuted 295 cases. Erie and Niagara counties, since the inception of the program, have prosecuted 43 cases. Since June of 2003, there have been 30 new Project Safe Neighborhood cases, 28 of these cases were in Monroe County while 2 of the cases have been in the Erie Niagara Region. The average time period of incarceration in a Project Safe Neighborhood case is 57 months in Monroe County and 52.20 months in Erie and Niagara Counties.

Coordinated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, between January 1, 2002 and December 31, 2002, there were 846 gun recoveries in Buffalo and 512 gun recoveries in Rochester. The number of guns recovered in Buffalo during this time period are the highest in the State after New York City.

U. S. Attorney Michael Battle stated that the case of United States vs. James Nigel Bostic is a case in point in the Project Safe Neighborhood initiative. James Nigel Bostic was indicted and pled guilty pursuant to Title 18, United States Coded, Section 922

(A)(1)(a), unlawfully dealing in firearms without a license. The defendant, with the assistance of three females, admitted to purchasing 238 handguns from gun shows in Ohio. After the guns were purchased in Ohio, Bostic brought them into Buffalo, sold them and had others sell them for him for profit. Many of these guns were recovered during gun crimes in Erie County. Sentencing in the United States v. James Nigel Bostic case is scheduled before District Court Judge William Skretny for January 11, 2004.

The hard work and dedication of a full complement of partners in Project Safe Neighborhoods is reducing gun violence and making our neighborhoods safer places to live.

* * *